

Message Text

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INFO AMEMBASSY BONN

AMEMBASSY BRUSSELS

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AMEMBASSY DUBLIN

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SUBJECT: "TIMES" INTERVIEW WITH FRENCH PRIME MINISTER
CHIRAC

1. THE TIMES OF NOVEMBER 21 PUBLISHED AN EXCLUSIVE
INTERVIEW WITH FRENCH PRIME MINISTER JACQUES CHIRAC.
MUCH OF IT DEALT WITH DOMESTIC FRENCH POLITICAL AND ECON-
OMIC MATTERS. HIS COMMENTS ON FOREIGN POLICY INCLUDED
THE FOLLOWING:

2. ENERGY POLICY. FRANCE CONSIDERS THAT THE SOLUTION
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TO THE OIL PROBLEM "IS NOT TO BE FOUND IN A CONFRONTA-

TION BETWEEN OIL CONSUMERS AND OIL-PRODUCING COUNTRIES, BUT THROUGH AN AGREEMENT AND COOPERATION BETWEEN THE TWO. THE INCREASE IN OIL PRICES IS NOT AN ABERRATION. IT IS EVEN, I WOULD SAY, UNDERSTANDABLE, BUT IT WAS TOO SUDDEN, EXCESSIVELY RAPID, AND NOT SUFFICIENTLY CONCERNED. THE SYSTEM SET UP BY THE GROUP OF TWELVE -- THAT IS TO SAY, BY THE AMERICANS -- SEEMED TO THE FRENCH GOVERNMENT DANGEROUS IN ITS CONSEQUENCES. THAT WAS WHY FRANCE HAD NOT WISHED TO BE ASSOCIATED WITH IT. BUT SHE WAS READY TO TAKE PART IN ANY DISCUSSIONS WHICH WOULD MAKE IT POSSIBLE TO SPEAK WITH THE OIL PRODUCERS AND OTHER BIG CONSUMERS. THIS IS THE TYPE OF PROCEDURE TO WHICH ONE SHOULD TURN, MUCH MORE THAN TO AGGRESSIVE ONES. THAT IS OUR FEELING TODAY. NATURALLY THINGS CAN EVOLVE, FRANCE IS REALISTIC AND WILL ADAPT HER POLICY TO THE EVOLUTIONS OF THE SITUATION." CHIRAC ALSO REITERATED THE USUAL FRENCH CALL FOR A COMMON EC APPROACH TO THE ENERGY PROBLEM.

3. EC RENEGOTIATION. "ON THE WHOLE, TAKING ALL COMMUNITY MECHANISMS INTO ACCOUNT, BRITAIN IS UNDOUBTEDLY A BENEFICIARY OF THE CAP." THE PROBLEM OF BRITISH PUBLIC OPINION AND THE CAP SHOULD BE SOLVED NOT BY MODIFYING THE MECHANISMS OF THE AGRICULTURAL POLICY, BUT BY MODIFYING "THE INFORMATION MECHANISMS OF THE BRITISH GOVERNMENT."

4' FRANCO-AMERICAN RELATIONS. THESE HAVE UNDERGONE "SOME CHANGES OF FORM" UNDER GISCARD. IN SUBSTANCE, HOWEVER, "WE ARE STILL TRUE ALLIES OF THE UNITED STATES, BUT DEMANDING WITH REGARD TO OUR INDEPENDENCE."

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